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DIVERS TONES

CLARENCE WATT HEAZLITT





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IN DIVERS TONES

LYRICS

BY

CLARENCE WATT HEAZLITT

Author of "When Skies are Gray"



BOSTON

SHERMAN, FRENCH & COMPANY

1917

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Vol. 1

TO
THE MEMORY OF
MY MOTHER

THE LYRIST

*The woods have sylvan lyres
On which the winds may play,
And clear is the piping of birds
In the meadows of May;
But there is richer melody,—
Deeper, sweeter, higher —
When the poet sings for me,
With his heart for lyre.*

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SOLITUDE

THE witch, Loneliness,—
I have seen her face,
When the setting midnight moon
Was shining through December woods.
I have seen her face,—
The witch, Loneliness,—
On gala-nights,
In splendor of electric lights,
When the streets surged with festive throngs
(To me but monks in sable hoods),
And the air shook with shouts and songs
And music of horn and rich bassoon,—
I have seen her face.

A WOMAN AND SIR GALAHAD

UNLESS I dream,— this man's eyes seem pure!
He is not unmindful,—
I can see that he admires,—
But he looks on me
As a priest might look on a picture of Our
Lady.

When I curve my foot, or clasp my hands,
When I let down my hair, coil after coil,
His gaze is serious, smiling, steadfast,—
Into these eyes he looks as a sweet boy might
look.

But this is no boy. . . .
On his lips, in his eyes
There is that which is strange to me,—
That which may keep him safe,
Where chieftains and kings have fallen.
I have heard of saints —
In desert cells and monkeries,
But not in guise of gallant knight
And warrior.
Holy Mother,— can this thing be,—
Can a *man* be — pure?

SLEEP, THE MAGICIAN

In dreams
All is well again.
The gray pall and the dark cloud
That enter into all things
Are unknown.
The world is young,
And the morning sun is shining.
In every hedge and fence-corner
Is the low restful insect-chorus;

And everywhere is the smell of hay
New-mown.
All is well again —
In dreams.

REVISITED

SINCE I was here,— is this enchanted ground
Where change comes not, though change is all
around?
The same fair light, the same deep pensive
hush
On leafy, shadowed lawn; in yonder bush
The selfsame robin trills its vesper song;
And yet — and yet — 'tis long — long —
Since I was here. O for the boon
Of this sweet calm,— this changeless after-
noon,—
Within my wild and troubled heart! 'Tis clear
That I, *I* have changed — since I was here.

PRAYER

I WOULD rest my soul in the green
Of the hills and meadows and trees:
Would that their life were mine,—
Deep calm life of the trees!

Would that my soul were one
With the rhythmical life of the trees!

I would rest my soul in the white
Of yon dreamily-floating cloud:
Would that I were as free and high,—
Would that I were as white!

I would rest my soul in the blue,—
Your wonderful blue, O sky!
Would God that I were as true —
And as happy — as you!

QUEST

FROM somewhere out of the wistful blue
Where clouds are resting dreamfully,—
Blending with far-off carol of birds —
A spirit seems to be calling to me,
 Calling and calling to me,
As though it were seeking — seeking to tell
Of some strange beauty that few may see,—
 Wistfully seeking,—
Why should it long to show beauty to me? . . .
 My God, is it you?

OUT OF THE YEARS

HE met me on a lonely walk
And in a lonely place,
When sunset fires were burning low,
He came upon me face to face,—
A pretty, dreamy boy I knew
Many years ago.

The same quaint wonder in his face —
The same shy questioning gaze —
As when the world beyond the hills
Was story-land,— a wonder-place
Of knights and dwarfs and fairy folk,
In those far-distant days.

More strange than any minstrel's lay,—
This mystery of the years!
The little boy I met to-day
With the weird smile and manner shy,—
Who met me on my lonely way,—
That dreamy boy was I!

IN A GALLERY OF PICTURES

THE spell — the spell of their dreams !

Here would I always stay,
Richly enshielded and safe
From the gray world without,—
That bleak world where I lived —
Was it only today?

Color and bloom are here;
Here there are wonderful skies;
Castles and trees are here,—
And haunting and beautiful eyes.

Indian summer is here,
And here is eternal spring;
Here there is light on the sea,
And blessed is everything.

God's own magical world
Where nothing offends nor hurts!
Soft is the light all about;
Here would I dream away,
Kindly enfolded and safe
From the terrible world without,
Dark with eternal gray. . . .

O, the spell of their dreams !

MOONRISE

GONE with the day is the sordid West,—
Voices metallic have ceased;
Still by the clatter and glare obsessed,
Now for your silence and dusk I long,
Ancient, mystical, changeless East!
Give me your deep, immemorial calm,
Born of the blend of your purple and orange!
Give me your myrrh and your healing balm,
East that is Samarkand, Babylon, Thebes,—
Mystery, love and song!

OCTOBER EVENING

PEARL and amber and rose,—
Ineffable calm and repose;
Into the amber sky
Blackbirds fly;
Into the orange west,
Through the gloaming, goes
My life's road,—
Orange and ashes-of-rose —
Peace and repose.

THE ADVANCE OF NIGHT

THEY fade through the west,— red streamers
and gold,
And the east is a dreaming world;
But anon through the zenith are standards un-
rolled
Of azure far-streaming emblazoned bold
With jeweled crescent and stars untold,—
The banners of Noctis unfurled.

HEATHCLIFF AND CATHERINE

WAS it you calling me all last night,
Or only the voice of the gale?
And when the sobbing and wailing ceased
And the stars came out,—
Was it you that looked on my face in the night,
Or only the pale moon,— Cathy? . . .

WITHERED BRANCHES

It was late afternoon in the winter woods
And low in the west was a band of light,
Dull and lurid,— the color of bronze,—
Barred by the woods' black columns.

The ground was strewed with branches and
twigs,
Twisted and gnarled,—which the frost had
lopped:
And one came and gathered them up
And bore them away through the gates of
bronze.

The time was late in the city streets,
The silence of frost and ice was deep.
Crouching women from doorways peered,—
Peering faces, bloodless and pinched.
Men were stretched on seats in the parks
With heads drawn down between shoulders
sharp:
And one came and gathered them up
And bore them away, as the clocks chimed
twelve.

THE ALIEN

SAID a queer little man of the world one day,
In a voice in a silvery key,—
“There is one among us who seems not of us,
And we like him not,” quoth he.

“In his far-away eyes is the light of skies,
In his voice is the sound of the sea;

And he bows not down to our little gold gods,—
We like him not,” quoth he.

“Our mantles black and our crimson hoods
On him are strange to see;
His garb is of white and the green of woods;
We like him not,” quoth he.

“As we grovel and play and swear and pray,
He takes no part,— not he.
His gaze seems pure as the light of stars,—
We like him not,— not we.

“In his far-away eyes is the light of skies,
In his voice is the sound of the sea;
And he will not bow to our little gold gods;—
We like him not,— not we.”

APPEARANCES

A BAD face? It may be so,
And a bad heart, too, for aught I know;
But that I know which I might tell
Of faces scorched with the fires of hell,—
Branded faces,— cut and scarred
Beyond imagining,— blasted, marred,—
And yet those faces — faces of saints!

No beauty there, you think, smock face?
 Not Hebe's cheek,— but trace on trace
 Of stress of conflict and slash of foe!
 A bad face? Ay,— mayhap
 An Augustine — saved from a harlot's lap.
 A bad face? It may be so,—
 With Sir Galahad's heart, for aught I know.

SEEMING

DANCING in joy is the sunlit sea,
 Murmuring, laughing, singing to me,
 Clapping white hands in radiant glee
 To the rise and fall of cadences free; —
 But yet — O sky that is bending above,
 What is she hiding from me,— the sea? —
Graves.

Resting and dreaming,— the moonlit sea;
 This murmuring song is a mother's croon;
 Lullabies low she is crooning to me,
 As we dream in the calm of the night's high
 noon.
 Yet, ah, yet — of her lord in the sky
 I would crave one boon,—
 This prayer would I make to her lord, the moon:
 Tell me her name.—
Death.

THE TIGER-CAT

My tiger-cat was bright and sleek
In her shining coat of yellow and black,
And softly she sung when I patted her cheek,
And gently she fawned as I stroked her back,—
My beautiful, beautiful tiger-cat.

As of figures in dreams that sway and float
Was the wondrous grace of my tiger-cat,—
For lithier she grew, and, truth to tell,
Far stronger than I,— yet, I confess,
I loved her terrible, fierce caress,
Her masterful beauty, strong and bright; —
But there came a night, there came a night,—
A night when she had her claws in my throat,
And the deep green eyes were aflame of hell,—
My beautiful, beautiful tiger-cat.

LOSING THE LILY

A LILY by my window grew,
Wondrous fair and tall,—
A lily of the light;
And all its beauty was for me,—
All its beauty white;
That closer it might be,—

Its bright head might fall
Upon my breast,—
I plucked it from its stem,—
When the lily it was lost to me,
And it was lost to all.

SIMON'S SON

My boy from whom I hoped so much! my boy,
Whose fair young face looked sweetly up to
mine;

With curly head and smiling lips and fine
Dark eyes that shone with eager hope and joy.
I trained him well, and taught him right employ
For subtle gifts of mind; of things malign
I warned,— the lure of women and of wine,—
And counseled pure delights that would not
cloy.

It cannot be! With passionate regard
He loved Him,—hung upon His word and
thrilled

With keenest pleasure at His lightest touch.
Sold Him for silver? God, my God,—'tis
hard!

Some midnight blast from hell, some curse fulfilled!

My poor, poor boy for whom I hoped so much!

BARABBAS

'Tis but a dream and vision of the night!
'Tis very dark — as of my dungeon,— dark;
Beat thou thy breast and rouse thee! yet, the
mark
Where fetters were, and are not, greets my
sight.
They told me I was free to seek the light,—
Yet all is dark. I dream — is this high
noon? —
Then what yon crimson orb, like blood-stained
moon?
I seem mid surging crowds . . . than earth
more bright
A radiance streams from skull-shaped hill
nearby;
I gaze . . . from middle cross of crosses three
It streams, on which a shining One, who calls
In silver-trumpet tones — to *me*? “I die
Where thou shouldst die — upon thy cross —
for thee!”
I do but dream within my dungeon walls!

DECEMBER

A PALLID sky that faintly, sadly smiles
As cold winds stir its veil of silv'ry gray;
Black trees that raise bare arms as if to pray —
In dread amid the hush that fills the aisles
Around,— forsaken aisles of tawny green,
All strown thick with frost-dark, shrivelled
leaves;

A silence brooding,— nay, that interweaves
With all the mystic meaning of the scene.
Ah, sad, pathetic silence! as of one
Who, bowed and dreaming, sits at end of day,
And muses o'er the ashes cold and gray
Upon the hearthstone; for the day is done,
And with it fled the hope again to see
A day that has been — and will never be.

BOWED

How heavily they weigh,—
The years.
So laded down are they
With loneliness and tears,
And they weigh
Upon my soul.
I would lift me up and pray

And go upon my way,
But the years,—
The cumulative fears
And burden of the years,
Their loneliness and tears,—
How wearily they weigh
Upon my soul!

THE FALLEN LEADER

Just a little grayer glooms the sky,
Just a little darker my pathway,
Just a little drearier falls the night,
Since I lost faith in you.

Just a little lower bows my head,
Just a little fainter beats my heart,
Just a little heavier burdens weigh,
Since I lost faith in you.

IN OLD TRINITY

ANOTHER world it is, and far removed.
In this rich gloom and solemn hush low-bowed,
How strange to think that but a step would
bring

The thronged and sunny street where stern-browed men
Shout and jostle in their eager strife,—
Thy children, Lord, in quest of golden toys.
But in this sacred place they seem as far
As if by seas and ages vast removed,
While He who bides the same from age to age
Alone is near and real to burdened souls.
“O Thou that changest not, abide with me!”

THE WAY HOME

To a city graveyard's farthest corner
Daily came a man to dream and pray,
When the sunset's level parting ray
Touched with crimson fire the marble mourner,
Gazing ever on the mounds below.
Gray-haired, bowed and dreaming,—even so —
Buried here his heart was, long ago.

Strange the contrast to the sad-browed man
Was a child who came each sunset hour
Through the graveyard, singing as she ran,—
Bonnie, blithe as any springtime flower.
Gaily sped she down the walk alone,
Disappearing through a gate of stone
Thick with moss and ivy overgrown.

Often had the lonely muser wondered
Why the child should take that dreary way,
Suited best to those who long had sundered
Ties that bind to childhood's happy day.
Half expecting prank of elf or gnome,
To his gentle query came reply:
"This way takes me straightest to my home;
To this gate my father's house is nigh."

WILLIAM WILSON

FOR me — and *now* — a tap at the door,—
A tap at the door for me?
Ay, just to say I come no more,—
No more need you open to me.

A FATAL PARTING

QUOTH Self Respect to Self Control,
"Be off, I have no need of you;"
QUOTH Self Control to Self Respect,
"My going would be the death of you!"

APOLLOS AT CORINTH

“No man can God and Mammon serve,”—
So spake the Lord in accents mighty;
And he must shatter brain and nerve
Who serves both God and Aphrodite.

TWO PORTRAIT-PAINTERS

ONE features paints,—nor reads the heart:
In surface beauty revels;
The other's deeper, subtler art
Paints witches, saints and devils.

SNOW AND FIRE

As oft may surge 'neath changeless snow
Volcanic fires untold;
So burning human hearts may glow
'Neath surface calm and cold.

SOPHISTICATION

How strange to find in the shy gray eyes
Reminder of things primeval!

When they so furtively glance sidewise,
Too plainly I trace
The world-old sign of a fallen race,—
The knowledge of good and evil.

MUSIC AND MYSTERY

A SONG there is at turn of every street,
As sweet as life,— were there ears to hear it;
A tale there is in every face you meet,
As strange as death,— were there seer to read
it.

DEAD IN DECEMBER

Madison Julius Cawein * died December 8th, 1914.

ALL white and hard the ground is and leafless is
the bush;
'Tis fitting that the woods are bare since silent
is the thrush;
For the music of the beech trees — the silence
of the pine; —
Since marble are the singing lips of Madison
Cawein.

* The poet pronounced his name with the accent on
the last syllable.

All black and dead the grass is and voiceless is
the hedge,
And sluggish is the creek's flow among the
frosted sedge;
For the singing of the orchards — the silence
of the pine; —
Since hushed and cold the heart is of Madison
Cawein.

'Tis fitting that the skies are draped, and air
and earth are still,
That not a wild thing stirs abroad on frozen
field or hill;
The world he loved is slumbering, as though to
give a sign
That closed forever are the eyes of Madison
Cawein.

But the songs he sung! They have not died,
nor will they die for aye,
But live to cheer the sons of men to time's re-
motest day;
The hearts of us are kindlier, our souls are more
divine,
For the singing of the one who sleeps,— our
Madison Cawein.

THE ART SUPREME

SAID student to sage in minster dim
While sunset rays were gilding,
And far through the west the cloudland elfs
Fantastic towers were building:
“What is the noblest art of all,
If counsel you were giving?”
“My son,” quoth he, “there is but one,—
The golden art that day by day
Weaves *Beauty* into *Living*.”

PURPOSE

God forbid that any eyes
Should duller be for me!
I would seek no richer prize
Than so to live
That some tired and listless eyes
Might beam again
For me.

God forbid that any cheek
Should paler be for me!
I would seek — seek
So to live
That some wan and faded cheek

Might bloom again
For me.

God forbid that any lips
Should sadder be for me!
Undismayed by graceless slips,
I would so live
That some pathetic and drooping lips
Might smile again
For me.

A DREAM

ASLEEP, or near to Sleep, I lay,—
Asleep, but as those who wake;
'Twas at the end of a weary day,
And my heart seemed throbbing as though it
would break
With burden of lonely woe,
When in the room a presence there was,—
A brooding presence of long ago,—
As of one that hovered in sympathy sweet,
As of one that to soothe and shelter would
seek,
As of one that bent low and kissed the cheek
Of her child of long ago.

THE DREAM CARESS

JUST the touch of one who cared,—
A tender and playful touch,—
A lifting the curls from the gloomy brow
Of one burdened overmuch;
But it carried me back — and back —
To boyhood's morning-land,—
Where the wilful boy had one who cared,—
And real was the dreamland hand.

THE FEAST OF HOPE

ROLL the light song along, high heap the plat-
ter,—
Raise the high song and strong,— high din and
clatter!
Thus the pale goblins of care shall we scatter:
For this is the eve of the world's avatar,
And all through the east shines a glory afar.

Encore on encore sing,— why trouble borrow?
Let voices roar and ring,— drown care and sor-
row!
Thunderous chorus of music sonorous,—
Trumpet and viol and cymbal,— breaks o'er
us!

Joy for tonight there is, hope for tomorrow;
For this is the eve of the world's avatar,
When the kindly of heart see the Magian star!

FUTILITY

I DREAMED in maze of flutes and viols
That sobbed and yearned in cadence sweet; —
Then dreamland faded, and I saw —
A woman reeling down the street.

I strolled rich galleries along
'Mid pictures by the mighty dead,
And through a window glanced to where
A child a drunken father led.

Where wondrous beds of pansies bloomed,
I wandered by a riverside,—
When,— just ahead,— a beckoning hand,
A smiling, luring face that lied.

What help, O Christ, for such as these
In pictures, pansies, symphonies?

CUI BONO?

STRIVE again? As though it mattered!
Yield the struggle,—
What's the use?
Ideals shattered,
Banners tattered,
Still you'd strive as though it mattered!
What's the use?

More endeavor — more abuse,—
Passions playing fast and loose,—
What's the use — what's the use?
Hunted, battered,
Blood-bespattered,—
Striving still as though it mattered?
What's the use?
Yield the struggle,—
What's the use?

“FOR SOMETHING AFAR ”

FAMISHING heart,
Yearning forever!
Satisfied never,
Famishing heart!
Deathless thou art

In thy longing endeavor,
Famishing heart
Yearning forever!

DOCTOR KENNEDY

Not far from the river around a bleak corner
Where sidewalks are battered to many a hole,
Where factory smoke drapes the sun like a
mourner,
And small shop windows display their wares,—
There hung years ago a storm-beaten sign:
“ Doctor Kennedy — office upstairs.”

Doctor Kennedy,—servant of all;
University honor-man;
Bushy gray hair and kindly eye,
Broad of shoulder and careless of dress,—
Little cared he for collar or tie,—
But the cheer of his voice seemed to heal and
bless.

His heart was tender, his brain was clear;
Gladly he served for many a year,
Answering calls by night and by day,
Summoned to cottage and cellar and loft;
Easily found when troubles and cares
Were thickest and heaviest,—quick to respond
Was *“ Doctor Kennedy,—office upstairs.”*

Never a bill or a dun sent he,
No collector in his employ;
His one reply to "Doctor, how much?"—
"Pay me whatever you can, my boy."—
Think it not strange that when he died
The streets were packed to the riverside.

For there came a day of no response,
Though the office door was open wide.
Small care had he taken by night or by day,
In fury of storm or wintry blast,
Small care he took,— there was none to chide:
Himself without stinting he freely gave.—
And barefoot children and coatless men
And women with shawls thrown over their heads
Thronged all the way to his open grave.

A man in workman's blouse spake out,—
His eyes were wet and his voice was broken:
"Men, for our friend,— this friend of ours,—
We can't do much,— we must give some token;
A shaft of gold as high as the sky
Would be none too good for the like of him."

Some days after,— a week at most,—
When the sun was low and the sunset clouds
Trailed up the sky like a ladder of gold,
Strong arms placed at the head of his grave
A planed and polished cedarn post,—

Rounded and chiseled,— the work was fine ;
And to it they fastened, 'mid tears and prayers,
The old familiar, beloved sign:
“ *Doctor Kennedy — office upstairs.*”

A RIPPLE ON THE SURFACE

(Chums discuss an incident)

“ HEARD about her,— Sadie Carter? ”

“ Sadie Carter? Don't recall her.”

“ Yes, you do; clerked for Kaiser,—
Glove department;

Good-looker and high-stepper,
Classic bust, and all that.”

“ Oh, yes; sure,— fond of clothes;
Seems all right, though,—

Wouldn't have a hat I bought her.”

“ Her folks are good,— old Virginia —
Widowed mother — only daughter.”

“ Well, what about her? ”

“ She got in bad at Clarke's Arcade
Tuesday,— stole a shirtwaist,
And they caught her.”

“ The deuce you say! ”

“ Some scene at the station,—
Several of the boys were there,—
I was there, and John Legare.”

“ John Legare! ” “ You know him, don't
you? ”

“ Know him? . . . Yellow streak, believe me!
Infernal scoundrel when at college!”

“ Right you are!

He’s been watching her for months,
Like a hawk.—

I can almost hear her now,—

‘ O my God, why did I do it!’

John went on her bond.

.

I saw them last night on a car,—
Tenth St. owl; they didn’t see me;
’Twas one o’clock or shortly after;
She had on some new white furs,—
Her face was whiter than the furs:
His eyes were on her like a vulture’s.
I saw them when they left the car
At ——, you know the corner.”

“ The very devil! So she’s gone!”

“ Yes,— and you and I

Are as bad as he that we didn’t warn her.”

THE SALVATION ARMY

“ BARE your heads in the presence of God,—
Glory to His name!”

(“ *That bunch holds forth every night.*”

“ *Look at those guys down on their knees!*”

“ *Believe me, they’re game, all right.*”

“ *Clear the way!* ” “ *Stop that car!* ”

“ *Lively, please!* ”)

“ *Make the people hear!* ”

“ *He saved my soul and I hold Him dear,—*

Hallelujah! ”

“ *Blow the bugles, batter the drums,—*

Glory to His name! ”

“ *I’m not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,—*

Glory to His name!

“ *There is rest for the weary,*

Rest for you —

(“ *That makes me feel like ‘ Kingdom come.’* ”

“ *Hey, Skinny! here’s a show.* ”

“ *I believe these folks are helping some.* ”

“ *Sounds good to me, if it’s only so.* ”)

Rest for the weary, there is rest for the weary,

In the sweet fields of Eden

There is rest for you.’ ”

“ *I proclaim the Light of the world,—*

Glory to His name! ”

(“ *I’m for yer — shoot it to ’em, cap!* ”

“ *Dunder und blitzen! don’t I get through?* ”

“ *Aw, what a very odd-looking chap!* ”

“ *Holy Moses! — is that you?* ”)

“ *Make the message clear!* ”

“ *That Light shines for me and you,—*

Hallelujah! ”

“ Make the people hear ;
Strike the cymbals, batter the drums,—
Glory to His name ! ”

SORROW FOR ANGELS

RING the bells of hell !
Let them boom across its moors,
Let them clang along its shores,
While red lightning cleaves the gloom,
While the ceaseless thunder roars,—
Through the prisons of the dead
Let them tell, let them tell,—
Let the gleeful news be spread :
One more soul — one more soul
Makes choice with fiends to dwell !

THE YELLOW PERIL

SILVERY wings and body of gold,—
Dead — and the lure of gold the cause ;
Delicate moth with wings of gauze,—
Dead from a flame of gold.

Ribanded, garlanded, golden youth,—
Dead through a father's lust for gold ;
At Mammon's shrine in very truth
Dead for the love of gold !

SLEEP

WEARY of a weary life,
Let him sleep;
Better than to pray or weep,
Now,— so weary of the strife!
Let him sleep.

Nought avails that he can do,—
Let him sleep.
Strenuous resolves to keep
He sought, and failed,— so may you.
Let him sleep.

Sunken cheeks and very pale,—
Let him sleep.
They who sow must also reap;
You and I may faint and fail.—
Let him sleep.

Such dark circles 'neath the eyes!
(Let him sleep.)
Eyes closed in slumber deep.—
Is there hope beyond the skies? —
Let him sleep.

FAILURE

A STAR shone down through the dark, dark
gorge
Where the pale self-murdered lay;
All night it shone on the pale, pale face,—
All night till the break of day.
O cold, kind star, so cold and far
Was the light of your guiding ray!

UNBIDDEN GUESTS

WHENCE can they be,—
Those faces I see,
That simper and fawn and smile on me,
That glimmer and lower, that leer and glower
At me when my eyes are closed?

May some sweet power
From the heaven of light,
Coursing clear down through the fathomless
night,
Save my soul from the faces I see,
Mocking and frowning and smiling at me,
Sometimes when my eyes are closed.

RESPITE

NIGHT by night my soul and I
Plunge in a river dark and deep,
 And nought we know
 But its onward flow
Till a cold gleam from the morning steep
Strikes through the river dark and deep,
 When my soul and I,
 With shudder and sigh,
Rise from Lethe, the river of Sleep.

CONFLICT

SILENCE such as this appals me,—
 'Tis the silence of the tomb.
*Nay, but of the holy cloister,
 And the angel-haunted room.*

On the bed the westering sunlight
 Strangely minds of deathly swoon.
*All the room is softly sleeping
 In the golden afternoon.*

Souls through mournful eyes are watching,—
 Sad unceasing vigils keep.
*Loving eyes that follow, bless thee,
 At thy work and in thy sleep.*

Haunting pictures, books and pictures,
Mocking spectres of the past!
*Friends unchanging, rather deem them,
Pure and patient to the last.*

Evermore the garden pathways
Wend through silence into shade.
*Peace is there and calm seclusion;
There sweet promises were made.*

Leagued with evil is this mirror,—
The pale horror of the face!
*There is One who fain would make it
Radiant with holy grace.*

Horror of the soul that ever
Loves the truth and does the wrong.
*Hope there is and overcoming,
Through the Stronger than the strong.*

Horror, ever deepening horror,
For the murderer of his past!
*“I am Alpha and Omega,
Ever first and ever last.”*

O the crushing, crushing burden,—
Burden of a life outworn!
*Cast thy burden on the Mighty,
Ev’ry burden He has borne.*

Through the blackness one voice only
 Ever lures and ever charms.

*Underneath forever, ever
 Are the Everlasting Arms.*

“Why not, why not end it quickly?
 One swift plunge, and all is o’er.”

*One there is who freely offers
 Life and love forevermore.*

“Why not,—why not end it quickly?
 One swift stroke, and all is o’er.”

*Thou may’st tread a shining pathway,
 Upward, upward evermore.*

Wave on wave black floods are surging,
 Fiends are pressing, horde on horde!

*Thanks be to God who victory gives
 Through Jesus Christ our Lord!*

KINSHIP

CALL of earth, call of earth, downward, down-
 ward:

Near and warm, warm and near,—earth calls,
 earth calls:

Light of stars, light of stars cold gleams, distant:

Warm flesh and blood am I,—earth's child,
earth's child.

AT THE BACK OF THE DESERT

INTO a desert far-removed he fared,
Where few have trod;
When, lo, upon the drear horizon flared
The mount of God!

BLACK WINS

LIFE's long game at last is over,—
Black wins.

Spite of hope recurring ever,
Spite of faith and brave endeavor,
Black wins.

Hate and scorn at last have triumphed,—
Black wins.
Slander black o'er pure intention,
Passion dark,—white Love's prevention,—
Black wins.

Fiendish skill too great for mortal,—
 Black wins.
 Echoing back from beam and rafter
 Sounding now the gloating laughter,—
 Endless darkness follows after,—
 Black wins, black wins.

WHITE WINS

YET for all this ghostly prowess,
 White wins!
 Puzzled, baffled, pale and haggard,
 Yield thee not, though hope be laggard,—
 White wins.

There's a way,— but give not over,—
 White wins.
 Well this dark and mocking stranger
 Knows despair's thine only danger,—
 White wins.

Through the Stronger than the mighty,
 White wins.
 Through the faith o'er all prevailing,
 Hope eternal, love unfailing,
 White wins, white wins.

WHITE AND GOLD *

I WOULD walk with Thee in white —
Snowy garb from crimson laver ;
Then with Thee would walk in light —
Golden sunshine of thy favor ;
Only they who walk in white,—
Only they are crowned with light.

AT SUNRISE

FRESH from the seas of dawn,
Day in his bright canoe
Rises and beckons and shouts,
Beckons to me and to you ;
Tossing his radiant hair
Flashing with golden dew,—
Fresh from the seas of dawn,
Day in his bright canoe.

ANOTHER CHANCE

ANOTHER day is given you,—
Beware, O man !
Mar not its record fair and new ;
Strength seek,— and plan.

* Reprinted through the courtesy of the publishers of
The Sunday School Times.

'Tis not in you to change the past,—
It stands for aye.
Then while this fair new day shall last,
Watch you,— and pray.

POSSIBILITY

JUST this to be said:
Day after day
Stoutly essay —
Living or dead —
The impossible way.
Why put a ban
On the possible way?
It would I tread,
Foeless and easy,—
Surely, I may?
Yes,— if you can.

FEBRUARY IN THE SOUTH

THOUGH the trees are bare,
There is languor in the air,
And voices far and near,
And laughter low and clear

From the passers in the night;
For despite a breath of chillness,
Sweet prophecies are cheering,
Through memories endearing,
In the warm and misty moonlight
And the pulsing, vocal stillness
Of this February night.

SPRING'S AWAKENING

At the kiss of this delicate air
The young Spring turns in his woodland bed,
And opens his drowsy violet eyes,
And sleepily wonders who has spread —
What gentle hand could have deftly tossed —
This bright green mantle over his bed,
With yellow flowers embossed.

APRIL

THE joyous beauty of April I love,
All free from the sad and old;
The beauty of azure and white all above
And pale green all around,
And decking the vivid emerald ground,
The gay bright beauty of gold.

APRIL NOON

FROM casements of the sky,
Which elfs of the rain have hung
With curtains white and blue,
The sunlight shimmers through
To lawns where lilacs bloom
And cherry blossoms strew
The tapestry of living green,
All broidered thick with lowly flowers
Of gold and purple hue.

PINK AND WHITE AND PURPLE

THERE's a mist along the river, there is purple
in the west,
And a faint delicious odor as of cherry blossoms pressed,
As I stray amid the twilight, through the pink
and purple gloom,
When the redbud and the dogwood and the
lilac are in bloom.

O the pink flush of the gloaming, the white
cloud and the star,
That send my thoughts a-roaming to the exquisite and far!

O the white and dreamy moonlight that goes
dancing through my room,
When the redbud and the dogwood and the
lilac are in bloom!

Let me wander through the meadow to the
misty riverside,
To the lonely tomb of winter, low-stricken in
his pride,
Then with pink and white and purple let me
heap his grassy tomb,
When the redbud and the dogwood and the lilac
are in bloom.

IN CHEROKEE PARK

WARM and sweet the breath of June
As I wander down a road
Dark with beechen greenery,
Passing flower-embowered homes,—
Like to lordly old châteaux
Or castles seen beyond the seas,—
Crowning verdant terraced hills.
Curves the road into the light.
On the driveways far below
Automobiles whirl and bound.
But here is summer's deep repose.
Clear within the vivid blue

Towers a cloud like mount of snow,
Bright above the wooded knolls;
On a broad and sloping lawn
Are trees with vines of crimson roses
Closely circling them around,—
Each a crimson column crowned
With the foliage of June . . .
White on azure, crimson, green,
In a faery landscape blending . . .
'Tis the spell of middle June.

BY SOUTHERN SEAS

FAR in the south I found a land,
Years and years ago,
Where, skirting the shores of gleaming sand,
Live-oaks and magnolias grow,—
Great evergreen oaks on bank and strand
With Spanish moss draped low.

A land where the surge of misty seas
E'er breaks over isles of dream;
And motionless leagues of giant trees
Like hosts enchanted seem;
The forests of pine, unstirred by breeze
At dawn or in sunset's gleam.

A far-away land of languid grace
 'Neath calm of azure skies,—
With the richer charm of the winsome face
 And the glance of smiling eyes,—
Frank and friendly, with never a trace
 Of cold and dark surmise.

By sunny bayous and sedgy creeks
 Blossoms the red wild rose,—
The rose that through long golden weeks
 In musky fragrance blows;—
The rose that on dark patrician cheeks
 In richer beauty glows!

JULY

IN airy robes my mistress goes
Of deep dark blue and shimmering green;
The warm air sighs through her long dark hair,
And sweet at her breast is the crimson rose;
Nor lip nor eye of maiden knows
 Her steadfast smile serene.

AFTER THE GAME

REST, little hand,
Safely enfolded ;
Tennis-entanned,
Rest, little hand ;
Long have I planned,
Petted and scolded ;
Rest, little hand,
Safely enfolded.

REPLY TO A VALENTINE

“ *A HEART I found, the other day,
I wonder if it's thine!* ”

A heart,— you have found?
Not mine, I assure you ;
To find *it* would cure you
Of tripping around,
Poor hearts to ensnare ;
For my heart is old,
And not worth the keeping ;
Beyond all compare
It is bitter and cold.
’Twere a sorrow profound,
And a matter of weeping,

If the heart you have found
Were no better than mine,
My sweet Valentine.

MIGNONETTE

DEAR little maiden smiling at me,
Artlessly, acting no part,
When you're older and wiser be,
No such smile will you have for me,—
Bless your innocent heart!

VITIUM FUNESTUM

THE poem's good, it quicks my blood,
It sends my fancy far a-gleaning;
For all that it can't be good —
It must be bad,— it has some meaning.

THE POEM A LA IMAGISTE

A RARE exotic,— if chaotic
Seem its slender grays and thin blues!
By all confessed, it stands the test —
It has no meaning (save to Hindus?).

HE GOES ON FOREVER

Long dead are hopes of wealth and fame,
 Youths' dreams are gone a-glinting;
 Yet signs along the streets proclaim
 That *Job* is still *printing*!

UNCLE SAM TO KAISER BILL

(February, 1917)

BILL, what's that I hear through your hat? —
 Arizona? New Mexico?
 And,— holy sword of Jehoshaphat! —
Texas? Why, Bill, don't you know
 Three-fourths of a hundred years ago
 Texas *alone*, at the Alamo,
 Frightened to death a bunch like that?

CHORUS:

Bill, my boy, stay where you are,—
 Don't you fool with the Lone Star!
 Nor the forty seven that back of it are:
 We're mighty patient, Bill, my boy,
 But talk like that,—
 Please record it,— we don't enjoy.

How does it read —“conquer them back”?
 Ha! ha! ha! — If I hadn't *seen*

The words, Bill! He seems to lack
Something essential,— Zimmie, I mean.
Arizona? New Mexico?
And — shades of Houston and Davy Crockett! —

Texas? Bill, surely you know
You haven't the world in your side-pocket?

It's true the fool thing sounds like a joke,—
But if not,— I'm blamed if I can see
Where you found the consummate bloke
That could perpetrate it; — that gets me.
But Bill, my boy, this is flat —
Better not try it (no bluster nor brag)—
Scores of millions are back of *that!*
You mustn't joke like a man on a jag
About striking stars from the American Flag!

Bill, my boy, stay where you are,—
Don't you fool with the Lone Star!
Nor the forty seven that back of it are:
We're mighty patient, Bill, my boy,
But schemes like that —
Take it from me — you can't employ.

THE PURPLE CAT

To my porch there came and sat
A very remarkable purple cat,
With eyes that would neither blink nor bat,—
 Eyes that were beryls pure.
With timorous crouch and gentle whine
She raised her blinkless eyes to mine,—
I never saw a green so fine,—
 Eyes that were beryls, sure.

ADVENT AND EXIT

THROUGH the night resounds
The challenge of his roar,
 As he bounds
Through the high and stormy arch
 Of the midnight sky,
Shaking snow and rain
From his gray and shaggy mane,—
To whom do I refer?
 March.

Through meadows dusk and chill
Beneath the sunset sky
He flees with plaintive cry,—
 Nimble-footed,

Snowy-fleeced;
And when the rainbow arch,
Now faint in paling gold,
Is lost in purple gloom,
He'll rest within the fold.—
“This refers to — whom?”
March.

YOUTH

THERE was one who bartered a golden cup,
All heavy with rubies and pearls,
For a draught of the nectar his lips would sup;
And he tossed the cup at the last sweet drop,
With a toss of his golden curls.

AGE

TOLLING the hours, tolling the hours,—
Dulcet the tones of the golden bell
Tolling the hours!
Would I were where the hours are not,
Their sad procession all forgot,
And need there were none for the golden throat
Of a bell that dulcetly,
Softly and solemnly,
Tolls the hours.

AN OCTOBER ELEGY

THERE is sunshine
Warm and mellow,
But 'tis veiled.
Trees are thick with leaves,
But they are edged with yellow,—
They were burned to red and yellow,
When Spring's life failed.
Butterflies,—
Not of gorgeous dyes,—
Small and yellow
Butterflies
Flit and hover
In the veiled light and mellow
Above the red and russet
Leaves that cover
All the ground.
Over dreaming meadows
Floats a still small sound,—
Now a droning — now a quaver,—
As of one that grieves;
And all the warm air
Is filled with a savor
Of death unto death,
From the burning of the leaves,—
With a churchyard flavor,
From the burning of the leaves.

MACHPELAH

BURY my dead
Out of my sight,—
Hopes that are dead.
Fairer were they
And purer than dawn,
And cherished for many and many a day.
Lay them away,
Out of my sight.

Bury my dead
Out of my sight,—
My dead past.
This poor ghost of a beautiful day
That perished utterly
Long ago
And so far away,—
Bury it deeply,
Out of my sight.

Bury my dead
Out of my sight,—
My dead self;
That sought to be patient, and smiled withal,
And bore its part in the world of men;
That was quick to hear the voiceless call
Of a soul in need; and even when

It suffered amid the cold-eyed throng,
Yet strove to be kindly and prayed to be
strong.—

Wrapped in its winding-sheet of dreams,
How long ago since it lived it seems!

A memory fair —

For a grave in the night.—

Bury my dead

Out of my sight.

BEFORE SUNRISE IN NOVEMBER

DEEP within a violet morning,
Through which blackbirds wheeled and chattered,

Hung the moon in pale glory
(Glory from the parting night —
Pallor from the coming day):
Like a shield of living light
High upon the crystal wall
Of some castle in the air,—
Deep within the violet morning.

NOVEMBER

QUIET and gray is the world today,
Like the ghost of a day I remember;

The woods I love are quiet and gray,
And quiet and gray is the sky above;
The sobered year is treading his way
Through the quiet and gray of November.

THE TWO GUESTS

(THIRTIETH PSALM)

SORROW comes like a lodger at even,
Clad in November's gray,—
But sweet faced Joy, like an angel from heaven,
Comes at the break of day;
Sorrow sojourns for the night, storm-driven;
But Joy will abide for aye.

MYSTERIES

A lurid day
Of bitter strife.—
That is life.

The long night
That followeth —
That is death.

A quickening Spirit
Day and night
Keeping ward —
That is God.

TRESPASS

AFTER the lapse of a careless day,
Come not in careless mood to pray.

For one there was in dreamy mood
Who sought to pray one night,—
When swift, insufferably fierce,
There smote a stress of dreadful might
Against his soul, as though to pierce
With fire, and strike his lips to dumbness.

'Tis no light thing to lightly pray
After the sin of a careless day.

AUDIENCE

To all who plead in fear or need
His face is turned assuringly;
The child who dreads the haunted dark,
The maiden with her rosary;
He bends His ear alike to hear
The rugged psalm, the aria;
The "now I lay me" of the child,
The vestal's Ave Maria;
For all amid this twilight dim
But children are, to Him.

AT THE TOMB

THE eyes of the faithless
Saw clothes of the dead ;
But love, through its tears,
Saw angels instead.

Feet that were faithless
Forsook Him and fled ;
But the arms that were true
Could carry Him — dead.

They had gone to their homes,—
Of such tales they were wary.
She lingered — and heard
The rare music of — *Mary*.

“ALL THAT I AM NOT IS HE”

ALL that I am not is He,
My holy One of Galilee ;
I am darkness — He is light ;
I am weakness — He is might ;
I in scorn and vengeful ire
Foes would overwhelm with fire,—
His the patience nought can tire.
He is all that I am not,

Or He my name from His book would blot.
Patient, bright and loving One,
May thy will, not mine, be done.

THE WHOLE BURNT-OFFERING

My body for thee, O God,—
This body of nerve and fire;
No cold and insensate clod,
But glowing with pure desire
And thrilled with an exquisite pain,
As the flame on the altar leaps higher;
Wholly for thee, my God,—
An offering made by fire.

SAFETY

WOULDST thou from ghosts be saved
In age or solitude,—
From dark illusions of the soul?
Among thy guests include
The Lord from heaven,
And o'er the door of thy soul have graved:
A home of the Holy Ghost.

THE WATER OF LIFE

“I WILL drink of the water of life,” I said,
And raised the cup for an eager draught,—
When a harlequin dressed in black and red
Dashed the cup from my lips, and
laughed. . . .

The pure sweet water of life, distilled
Of the blue of skies and the shimmer of woods
And the notes of birds that at evening call
And the golden light of the rarest moods;—
I lifted the cup with the nectar filled;—
“Not for you is the cup,” he said,
As he struck it down and the nectar spilled;
“There’s a sweeter draught for you,” he said:
But he gave me a cup of the purest gall,—
The harlequin clad in black and red.

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